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WEIGH-A-DAY-A-MONTH

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE, U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Dairy-Herd-Improvement Letter

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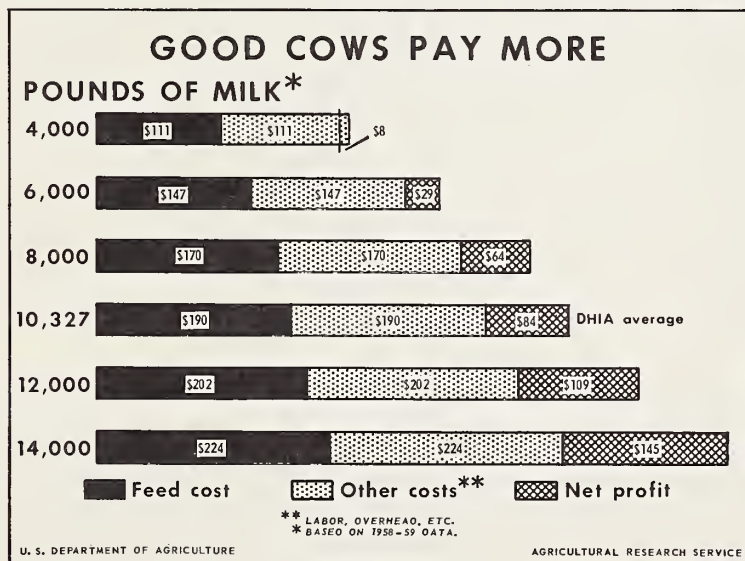
December 1960

## YEAR AFTER YEAR--GOOD COWS PAY MORE

A summary of 26,080 yearly herd records completed in 1959 tells a familiar story to DHIA members -- good cows pay more.

While DHIA members have this information on their cows and herds month after month, and year after year, the yearly summaries show all dairymen the profitableness of high-producing cows as compared to low-producing cows.

The following bar graphs, based on the assumption that feed cost represents approximately one-half the total cost of producing milk, show the relationship of high production and high returns.



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Issued January 1961



Growth Through Agricultural Progress

HOW ARE WE DOING IN DAIRY HERD IMPROVEMENT IN U. S. A.?

Often the question is raised "How does the dairy herd improvement (DHIA) and sire-proving programs in this country compare with similar programs in foreign countries? Have the methods and procedures used in improving dairy herds in this country been as effective as those used in foreign countries?

While there is no simple answer to these questions, a recent compilation of data by U. S. D. A.'s Foreign Agricultural Service does provide some interesting information on the questions as indicated in the following table:

Comparison of Cows on Test in 7 Countries

Country	Total cows in milk <u>1/</u>	Average of all cows in milk <u>1/</u>	Total number cows on test	Percent	Pounds average for cows on test
United States	19,773,000	6,316	2/ 1,548,884	2/ 7.8	2/ 10,327
Netherlands	1,525,000	9,022	3/ 1,001,073	3/ 65.8	3/ 9,438
Denmark	1,415,000	8,019	4/ 851,246	4/ 59.4	4/ 9,288
United Kingdom	3,884,000	6,819	5/ 688,808	5/ 28.0	5/ 9,194
West Germany	5,572,000	7,070	6/ 1,809,000	6/ 32.5	6/ 8,650
Switzerland	901,000	7,071	7/ 30,000	7/ 3.0	7/ 8,164
Belgium	996,000	8,282	8/ 141,874	8/ 14.6	8/ 8,399

- 1/ Source: FD6-60 - June 7, 1960 Foreign Agriculture Circular, U. S. Department of Agriculture.
- 2/ DHI newsletter - October 1960, Dairy Cattle Research Branch, ARS, USDA.
- 3/ Stichting-Central Milk Controle, Dienst-1958, (official milk control publication).
- 4/ Survey of the Statistical Results of Danish Milk Recording Societies 1958-59, the National Committee of Danish Milk Recording Societies.
- 5/ Nation Milk Records, 1957, Milk Marketing Board, Thames Ditton, Surrey, England.
- 6/ Statistisches Jahrbuchueber Ernsehrung, Landwirtschaft und Forster, 1959, (Statistical yearbook of Nutrition and Forestry - West German Ministry of Agriculture).
- 7/ Based on official 30,000 cow records for Brown Swiss breed only, Sementhol records not available in this office. The Commission of Swiss Cattle Breeding Association, Bern, Switzerland.
- 8/ L'Elevage Bovin en Belgique, 1957. Animal Production Service, Belgian Ministry of Agriculture.

The above data indicates that the effectiveness of USA's Dairy Herd Improvement (DHIA) Sire-Proving programs compares very favorable with that of similar programs in foreign countries. Furthermore, the DHIA and Sire-Proving programs in this country are now being greatly improved. It is logical to expect that the effectiveness of the improved programs to increase the producing efficiency of dairy herds will be further increased in the future.